

Week Ending Friday, October 19, 2001

## **The President's Radio Address**

*October 13, 2001*

Good morning. This week we opened some important new fronts in the war on terror. We're taking the war to the enemy, and we are strengthening our defenses here at home.

In last week's radio address, I warned that time was running out for the Taliban to turn over the terrorists they shelter. They did not listen, and they are paying a price.

On Sunday American and British forces launched strikes at terrorist camps and Taliban military targets in Afghanistan. Our men and women in uniform are performing as they always do, with skill and courage, and they have achieved the goals of the first phase of our campaign. We have disrupted the terrorist network inside Afghanistan. We have weakened the Taliban's military, and we have crippled the Taliban's air defenses.

American forces dominate the skies over Afghanistan, and we will use that dominance to make sure terrorists can no longer freely use Afghanistan as a base of operations.

This campaign will not be completed in one attack. Our enemy prefers to attack the helpless. He hides from our soldiers. But we're making a determined effort to take away his hiding places. The best defense against terrorism is a strong offensive against terrorists. That work continues.

At the same time, we are taking further action to strengthen our protections against terrorism here at home. This week I signed an Executive order creating a new Office of Homeland Security. The Office is headed by a skilled and tested leader, former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge.

Governor Ridge is a decorated Vietnam combat veteran. He's an effective executive, and he knows what we're up against because his own State was one of the three where Americans died on September the 11th.

Governor Ridge is charged with coordinating a comprehensive national effort to protect our country against terrorism, to frustrate terrorists' plans, to help protect vulnerable points, and to prepare our response to potential threats. Tom Ridge will report directly to me, and he will have the full support of our entire Government.

I understand that many Americans are feeling uneasy. But all Americans should be assured: We are taking strong precautions; we are vigilant; we are determined; the country is alert; and the great power of the American Nation will be felt.

Our Nation is grateful to so many Americans who are rallying to our cause and preparing for the struggle ahead: FBI agents; intelligence officers; emergency response workers; public health authorities; State and local officials; our diplomats abroad; law enforcement teams who safeguard our security at home; and soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who defend us so far away.

Many others are asking, "What can I do?" Americans already contribute to the war on terror by their patience and patriotism, by their resolve and generosity.

Yet, I have one more task, one especially for America's children. I urge you to show the best of America by directly helping the children of Afghanistan who are suffering from the oppression and misrule of their own Government. Many are malnourished; many are starving.

Put a dollar in an envelope. Mark it, "America's Fund for Afghan Children," and send it here to the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20509-1600. Working with the American Red Cross, we will get that money to Afghan children in need.

This is something the children of America can do for the children of Afghanistan, even as we oppose the brutal Taliban regime. We will oppose their evil with firm justice, and

we will answer their hatred with compassion for the Afghan people.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:20 a.m. on October 12 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Videotaped Remarks to the American Society of Anesthesiologists**

*October 14, 2001*

Thank you very much. I'm honored to have this opportunity to speak to the American Society of Anesthesiologists.

During the past few days, our Nation has experienced one of the darkest moments in our history. Yet, even in the midst of this tragedy, the eternal lights of America's goodness and greatness have shown through. We've seen it in the countless Americans who gave blood or donated money. We've seen it in the tales of heroic police officers and firemen who went into the World Trade Centers to save lives. And we've seen it in the simple yet profound gestures of love and patriotism from every part of the American family.

It's been said that public service is not limited to public office. And the events of the past few days have shown how true that is. I want to thank all of you in the American Society of Anesthesiologists for doing your part during the difficult past few days. Whether it was the doctors who worked overtime to help victims in New York and Washington or those who gave money and offered prayers, our Nation is blessed by so many dedicated health care professionals.

But the business of our Nation goes forward. America faces many challenges, including those in health care. Let me be clear about this: We will win the war on terrorism, and we will also continue to fight important battles at home. And that means my administration remains committed to improving the

quality of health care for all Americans and improving Medicare for all seniors.

My administration remains committed to passing a real Patients' Bill of Rights. With your help, we'll pass a bill that puts the care of patients in the hands of doctors, not trial lawyers. I will continue to support common-sense reforms that enhance the rights of the patient without unnecessarily raising the cost of health care and increasing the number of uninsured. And I believe this can be done.

The compromise Congressman Norwood and I forged this summer—and passed by the House of Representatives—represents the best and most real solution. Simply put, it achieves both the goals of improving the quality of health without unnecessarily raising health care costs.

And for our seniors, we're committed to reforming Medicare. For too long, too many doctors and too many Medicare patients have had to fight not only illness but also bureaucracy. My goal in reforming Medicare is to make it less bureaucratic and more efficient.

Here are the main principles for strengthening and improving Medicare: Nobody on Medicare will see any change in Medicare unless he or she wants it. There will be new Medicare choices, and all of these new choices will offer prescription drugs. Medicare plans will compete by offering better service and lower premiums. Medicare will respond better to the needs of seniors, especially low-income seniors and seniors with high medical bills. And Medicare modernization will strengthen the program's long-term financial security.

These are principles which will strengthen one of our Nation's most sacred obligations, the health of our senior citizens. We will protect seniors now, offering exciting new services and more choices to seniors in the future and guarantee prescription drug coverage. And we will do it without overtaxing our children and our grandchildren.

Medicine is constantly improving. Medicare must keep pace. That's my administration's commitment today and its exciting new vision for health care in America.

Again, thank you all for allowing me to join you. And thanks for all you are doing to make America great. God bless you all, and may God bless America.